

Meadow Lane Infant School



Humanities Policy

1. Introduction

At the heart of everything we do at Meadow Lane is the belief that the children in our school should have the opportunity to learn through a rich curriculum that gives a wide range of first hand experiences and the opportunity to develop skills for life. In order to empower our children in their learning, we aim to provide a relevant curriculum that connects with their own experiences and interests and a curriculum that allows and encourages our children to be expressive and creative in their approach to learning.

2. Aims:

The fundamental aim of the study of Humanities is to help our pupils develop an understanding of their own lives and the world in which they live. This is achieved through the study of individuals, societies, cultures and the environment.

At Meadow Lane, the learning of humanities promotes

- An understanding of the causes and consequences of change through physical and human actions and processes.
- Knowledge and understanding of people, cultures and events in a variety of places and at different times.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A desire to be proactive local and global citizens.
- Skills in questioning, formulating opinions and arguments, making judgements and carrying out investigations.

3. Humanities: Key Knowledge & Skills

Geography:

- Knowledge and understanding of places - Pupils develop their sense of identity through learning about their locality and the wider world.
- Knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes - Pupils recognise and explain selected physical and human processes.
- Knowledge and understanding of environmental relationships and issues - Pupils describe how people damage or improve the environment (sustainable development).
- Develop geographical skills and vocabulary necessary to carry out effective geographical enquiry.

History:

- Knowledge and understanding of chronology - Pupils recognise that the past can be divided into periods of time.
- Develop a range and depth of historical knowledge and understanding- Pupils develop factual knowledge of events, people and changes in the past.

- Interpretations of history - Pupils identify with confidence some of the different ways in which the past is represented.
- Develop historical enquiry skills - Pupils study evidence, ask questions and solve problems.

4. Organisation

The curriculum is organised into half-termly Key Stage One topics and runs on a two yearly cycle. The choice of contexts in which the curriculum is delivered is designed to allow flexibility and places a strong emphasis on pupils' starting points, interests and talents. This engenders creativity and allows children to express their understanding and responses to investigative and enquiry based learning in a unique and individual way, embracing preferred learning styles.

As well as our thematic two yearly planning cycle, we maintain a strong relationship with our link school, the Kings School in Ghana. This provides us not only with the exciting opportunity of contrasting two very different geographical regions but also provides the children with a very positive experience of recognising the similarities and needs of the people of the Tolon-Kumbungu district of Northern Ghana and the people of Chilwell, Nottingham.

5. Planning

In Foundation Stage the topics are taught on a yearly cycle and cover a variety of subjects including Ourselves, The Environment, Noah, The Little Red Hen, and many more. A continuous planning approach enables the teachers to ensure full coverage of the areas of learning and there is planned progression in all areas. (See Early Years Policy for more detail).

In Key Stage 1, planning is undertaken by the year 1 and year 2 planning teams. This is in line with the 'New Primary Curriculum' document and 'Planning a Skills Based Curriculum' document. Detailed schemes of work have been compiled and will continue to evolve to ensure progression and breadth across year groups. Planning teams provide a framework for colleagues to share expertise and integrate exciting, effective and relevant learning opportunities across the curriculum for historical and geographical skills to be developed.

6. Teaching and learning

At Meadow Lane, the curriculum is taught using a cross-curricular approach. Thematic topics provide the basis for making meaningful links between the humanities subjects. When appropriate, these subjects are taught separately. To enhance the learning experience of our pupils, our humanities curriculum acknowledges and incorporates different styles of learning. The knowledge, skills and understanding gained through the humanities curriculum is acquired through a variety of experiences. These include:

- Educational trips (e.g. Nottingham Castle, Newstead Abbey)
- Field studies during residential trips (eg. Sherwood Forest)
- Themed Days (eg. The Queens Coronation, Medieval Day, The Great Fire of London)
- Visits from people in the community (eg. The Emergency Services)
- Drama and role play – including visiting Theatre Companies.
- The use of primary sources of information (e.g. artefacts, photographs, maps and visitors)
- Story telling
- Practical enquiry and research

- Philosophical discussions and debates
- Individual and group presentations
- The use of ICT
- Creative activities such as model making including handling wood, clay and textiles, sewing, cooking, ICT, painting and collage.

7. Assessment

One of the important aspects of assessment is that it supports future planning and teaching of humanities. At Meadow Lane, assessment for learning (AFL) is integrated in all parts of the teaching and learning process. The assessment of Humanities is undertaken continuously by class teachers and other teaching staff whilst pupils are engaged in tasks. Children’s work also provides evidence of learning and skills acquired. The cross-curricular nature of History and Geography means that children are able to explore themes, ask questions and problem solve through Drama, Art, DT, ICT, PSHE, RE and Citizenship. Evidence of skills and understanding can therefore be sourced from a wide range of work. Photographs, books, models, writing, art and videos of children’s work are displayed around school and stored on the server.

Valuing children’s work is vital to their continued motivation, enjoyment and the empowerment of their learning. As well as displays of work, class assemblies provide the children with an opportunity to share their skills and knowledge with families and carers.

8. Monitoring

Monitoring of the standards of the children’s work and of the quality of teaching in Humanities is the responsibility of the class teacher, the planning teams and the senior management team.

9. Equal opportunities/ Inclusion:

At Meadow Lane, our aim is to develop the potential of all our pupils. In order to achieve this, we ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity and necessary support they need to access the humanities curriculum, regardless of sex, race, religion and ability, including children who have a special gift or talent in this area. The strong emphasis on pupils’ starting points, interests and talents enables the Humanities curriculum to respond to change and allows it to reflect the current needs of our pupils and the ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds represented in our school community.

Staff reviewed

Date ratified:

Date for review:

Signed : Head teacher

..... Chair of SDC committee